

Activity:	Natural Programs
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Activity Summary

Program Components	2002 Enacted	2003 Estimate	2004			Change From 2003 (+/-)
			Uncontr/ Related Changes	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Rivers and Trails Studies	918	919	+3	-1	921	+2
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance	8,184	8,228	+62	+1,489	9,779	+1,551
National Natural Landmarks	989	993	+7	-1	999	+6
Hydropower Recreation Assistance	803	808	+5	-1	812	+4
Total Requirements	10,894	10,948	+77	+1,486	12,511	+1,563

Authorization

16 U.S.C. 1271 - 1287	The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended
16 U.S.C. 1241 - 1249	The National Trails System Act, as amended
16 U.S.C. 460/ - 460/-3	The Outdoor Recreation Organic Act
16 U.S.C. 797(e), 803(a)	The Federal Power Act, as amended
16 U.S.C. 1a-5	National Park Service Organic Act, as amended
16 U.S.C. 1273	Historic Sites Act of 1935
16 U.S.C. 1-5	General Authorities Act of 1970, as amended
16 U.S.C. 1908	Mining in the National Parks Act of 1976
Public Law 104-333	Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996

Activity Overview

Natural Programs include the development and completion of Congressionally mandated studies of river and trail routes for possible inclusion in the National Scenic and Historic Trails or Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems; programs to increase river and trail opportunities through State and local technical assistance; the national trails programs; the management of the National Natural Landmarks program; and programs to assist in the development of agreements with hydropower facilities/projects that impact public access to river and recreational resources.

Draft DOI Outcome Goals Applicable to this Activity**Resource Protection****1.1 Improve Health of Watersheds, Landscapes, and Marine Resources**

Programs within this subactivity support this goal by providing technical assistance, performing studies and supporting partnerships that improve resource management and restore and maintain watersheds and landscapes. For example, the Rivers and Trails Studies program provide assessments for the viability of designating proposed rivers as Wild and Scenic Rivers.

1.2 Sustain Biological Communities

The Rivers and Trails Studies and Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program components support this goal by providing technical assistance and supporting partnerships that create habitat conditions for biological communities to flourish and performing studies to improve information and assessments used for decision making.

1.3 Protect Cultural and Natural Heritage Resources

The National Natural Landmarks program component support this goal by encouraging the preservation of the best remaining examples of the major biotic communities and geologic features composing the nation's natural landscape through formal designation and technical assistance.

Recreation

3.1 Improve Access to Appropriate Recreation Opportunities on DOI Managed or Partnered Lands and Waters

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance and Hydropower Recreation Assistance program components support this goal by promoting recreational opportunities, and improving capacities to provide access for recreation through partnerships and technical assistance. For example, the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program worked with the City of Blanco, TX, on a project that will restore Town Creek, establish a thriving riparian habitat zone, and create an interpretive trail, arbor, amphitheater, and picnic tables to provide opportunities for healthier living and expanded cultural and historical events in the area.

3.2 Ensure a Quality Experience and Enjoyment of Natural and Cultural Resources on DOI Managed or Partnered Lands and Waters

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance, National Natural Landmarks and Hydropower Recreation Assistance program components support this goal by providing technical assistance and creating partnerships to enhance the quality of recreation opportunities and to ensure responsible use in recreation.

Activity: Natural Programs
Program Component: Rivers and Trails Studies

FY 2004 Base Program Overview

River and trail studies are undertaken when authorized by Congress and may be the responsibility of Interior, Agriculture or the joint responsibility of both departments. Select **rivers** and **trails** which show the potential to be authorized by Congress go through extensive research before studies are forwarded to Congress.

- **Rivers.** In order to be considered, a river must be in free-flowing condition and possess one or more of the following values to a remarkable degree: scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values.
- **Trails.** Selection is based on the national significance of the route and the recreational or historic resources along the route.

In addition to the basic prerequisites, **rivers** and **trails** are assessed for their feasibility. A determination of feasibility is based on costs that would be entailed in designating the site, impact on the surrounding environment, timeliness of such action, recreation opportunities, and local or State interest in acting to protect and manage the resource.

Workload and performance tables are found after the justification of program changes at the end of this activity.

At a Glance...

- A river study must receive Presidential recommendation before being sent to Congress. If authorized, it becomes part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.
- A trail study is sent to Congress by the Secretary of the Interior. If authorized, it becomes a part of the National Trails System.



NPS Director Fran Mainella helps commemorate the opening of the Tennessee River Blueway

FY 2002 Program Performance Accomplishments

- Studies conducted on the following rivers: Musconetcong (New Jersey), New (Virginia and West Virginia), and Taunton (Massachusetts)
- Initiated studies of the Star-Spangled Banner Trail and the Washington-Rochambeau Trail

FY 2003 Program Performance *(Based on the FY 2003 President's Budget)*

- Complete study of the Star-Spangled Banner Trail in Maryland and the District of Columbia
- Initiate studies including the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary War Route extending from New England to Virginia, the Navajo Long Walk in New Mexico, and the Monadnock-Metacomet-Mattabessett Trail in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut
- Support follow-up activities authorized in legislation for several recently-designated wild and scenic rivers such as the Concord, Wekiva, and lower Delaware
- Support congressionally-directed studies for areas that might be designated as heritage corridors, tour routes, affiliated areas or other similar designations that respond to local initiatives but are not units of the national park system

FY 2004 Budget Request: Rivers and Trails Studies

Request Component	Amount
FY 2003 Budget Estimate	919
Programmatic Changes	
• Information Technology Reduction	-1
TOTAL, Program Changes¹	-1
Uncontrollable changes	+3
FY 2004 Budget Request	921
Net change	+2

¹Justification for program changes can be found at the end of this activity's presentation.

Activity: Natural Programs
Program Component: Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance

FY 2004 Base Program Overview

Every year the National Park Service is approached by over a thousand local governments and nonprofit organizations seeking assistance in conserving, enhancing, and developing their communities to be healthier and more livable places. The goal of the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program (RTCA) for FY 2004 is to assist over 250 communities in achieving their conservation and outdoor recreation goals.

This low-cost investment by the Federal Government helps partner organizations and local governments benefit from lessons learned elsewhere in the country. It also helps them successfully navigate the imposing array of resources and strategies available through Federal agencies and non-governmental groups.

This program adheres to the following key principles:

- Projects are undertaken only at the request of a local community.
- The NPS generally concludes its involvement within two years.
- Tangible benefits for recreation or conservation are expected.
- A high level of public participation in planning efforts is encouraged and valued.
- Grant funding from the NPS is not supplied; rather, NPS staff seeks to help their project partners leverage necessary funding through public-private partnerships.

Communities aided by the Service vary widely, from small, rural communities to metropolitan Dallas to neighborhoods in the Bronx. Some partners are relatively sophisticated agencies of local governments or established nonprofit groups, while others are groups newly formed to accomplish a single vision, such as a new trail or a greenway. For instance, chambers of commerce, youth volunteer service corps, garden clubs, and natural resource districts have all been NPS partners through this program.

While these partners each seek to accomplish unique projects, their efforts often can be categorized as follows:

- **Greenway Development.** Most Americans' primary contact with nature and the outdoors comes through close-to-home trails and greenways. NPS helps communities plan and protect a wide variety of greenways, from urban promenades to buffers of natural wildness. The Service has been very successful in helping partner communities access Federal "TEA-21" transportation funding for this purpose.
- **River Conservation Planning.** The National Park Service offers assistance that helps communities conserve important rivers. Projects such as downtown river greenways and watershed protection programs not only benefit natural resources but also bolster local economies by enhancing recreational potential and property values. Moreover, millions of dollars in Federal disaster assistance and flood insurance payments can be prevented through sound river planning that reclaims flood-prone land as park and open space when flooded property owners choose to relocate.
- **Rail-To-Trail Conversions.** The Service helps communities to recycle abandoned railway corridors by converting them into popular "rail-trails." The Service alerts communities whenever an abandonment of a nearby rail right-of-way is imminent.

By working side-by-side with grassroots groups and local governments in communities throughout the country, NPS is building a nationwide system of parks, open spaces, rivers, and trails. The program's goal is to add miles of trails and protected river corridors, and acres of parkland and protected open space that will provide the Nation with educational, recreational, and conservation benefits. Through RTCA partnerships, NPS helps conserve over 750 miles of river corridor, develop over 1,500 miles of trails, and protect over 90,000 acres of park, habitat, and open space annually, at no long-term cost to NPS.

Workload and performance tables are found after the justification of program changes at the end of this activity.

① For further information on RTCA, visit them online at: <http://www.nps.gov/rtca>

FY 2002 Program Performance Accomplishments

- NPS staff for this program are based in 34 field locations to make them more readily accessible to nonprofit organizations and local and State governments in all 50 States. In FY 2002, the Service was able to formally address 264 requests for new project assistance.
- 430 miles of railroad corridor were abandoned. Of these, close to 200 miles are being considered for trail use.
- Taos, NM - The Rocky Mountain Youth Corps built the first 1.5 miles of a trail network which will eventually connect parks, schools, businesses, and the downtown to an existing network of trails.
- Princeville, NJ - The City of Princeville unveiled its first three miles of walking trail. This interpretive heritage trail is used to spur interest in the community's rebirth.
- Chattanooga, TN - May 11, 2002 – The Tennessee River Blueway, a 50 mile flatwater paddling trail, opened to much celebration. This unique trail features well-marked access locations and campsites providing close-to-home recreation opportunities.
- Seattle, WA – Lakes-To-Locks Water Trail celebrated the rich water heritage of Seattle with 100 launch and landing sites. Local trail partners include the cities of Seattle, Renton, Mercer Island,

Issaquah, Bellevue, Redmond, Woodinville, Bothell, Kirkland; King County; Washington State Parks; Washington Fish and Wildlife; the Port of Seattle; and Army Corps of Engineers.

- Allegheny Mountains Region, MD – The Neff Run Phase I project was completed and demonstrates the benefits of a multi-objective approach stream restoration. The effort was made possible through a partnership of 20 public, private, and non-profit entities.
- Alpharetta, GA – A new 6.1 mile trail and greenway system was made possible by a \$5 million bond referendum for the greenway passed by the community of Alpharetta. The greenway offers opportunities for walking, bird watching, rollerblading and biking.
- Porter County, IN – The 9.1 mile Calumet Bike Trail, which by the early 90's had deteriorated and was unusable, was reopened in 2002. The trail reestablishes an important link from Michigan City to the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, a key piece of a trail network that will eventually connect Chicago and southwest Michigan.

FY 2003 Program Performance *(Based on the FY 2003 President's Budget)*

- Formally address approximately 311 requests for new project assistance
- Conserve 220 acres of habitat and open space providing recreational opportunities for the surrounding community of Northglenn, CO
- Create the Willamette River Greenway from Eugene to Keizer, Oregon, including water trails, land trails, and connections to parks and open spaces
- Assist City of Orange, California, staff with preparation of conceptual master plan for Santiago Creek, including guidance on public involvement. The intent is to increase flood control, open space and recreation opportunities along the 7-mile creek
- Work with neighborhoods in Elizabeth, NJ, to build and improve trails, parks, open spaces, community gardens and streams
- Conservation of significant lands in the Oyster River Bog, ME, which will be accessible by a trail system that is user-friendly and protective of the resource through assistance to the Oyster River Bog Association to finalize its ATV policy, build a volunteer trail stewardship team, create a trail map and brochure, and help build the new stewardship and lands committee
- Build an integrated network of biking routes in Indianapolis/Marion County, IN, working with the League of American Bicyclists
- Complete a 22 mile trail along the Arroyo Seco, CA, connecting to a larger trail network and integrating floodplain management, water quality improvement, habitat rehabilitation, and educational and recreational opportunities
- Link cultural, natural, and commercial sites with an 18.5 mile trail, connecting the USS *Arizona* Memorial, in Pearl Harbor/Aiea, to rural Nanakuli-Waianae

FY 2004 Budget Request: Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance

Request Component	Amount
FY 2003 Budget Estimate	8,228
Programmatic Changes	
• Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance	+1,500
• Information Technology Reduction	-11
TOTAL, Program Changes¹	+1,489
Uncontrollable changes	+62
FY 2004 Budget Request	9,779
Net change	+1,551

¹Justification for program changes can be found at the end of this activity's presentation.

Activity: Natural Programs
Program Component: National Natural Landmarks

FY 2004 Base Program Overview

Qualified sites are evaluated by the National Park Service and designated National Natural Landmarks (NNL) by the Secretary of the Interior. NNL program responsibilities include monitoring the condition of designated sites, providing liaison with landowners, fostering partnerships with Federal, State, local, and municipal agencies and conservation organizations, providing program information to interested parties, and securing technical assistance to landmark owners or arranging for designation ceremonies when requested.

Evaluation of sites for potential designation as new NNLs continues in FY 2004. Internet-based information on the NNL program is also being upgraded. The NNL program is continuing to coordinate with the NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program and the network of Cooperative Ecosystems Study Units, and to engage in partnerships with academic institutions in various aspects of achieving the program's objectives.

In FY 2004, work continues on the boundary adjustments needed to process withdrawals from existing NNLs; this includes identification and mapping of the owner's parcel boundaries, modification of the NNL boundary, and reviews by the National Park System Advisory Board prior to the Secretary's approval. All NNL boundary maps are being revised using Geographic Information Systems to improve their accuracy and clarity.

Workload and performance tables are found after the justification of program changes at the end of this activity.

① For further information on NNL's, visit them online at: <http://www1.nature.nps.gov/nnl/index.htm>

FY 2002 Program Performance Accomplishments

- Completed expansion of National Natural Landmark web pages to provide maps of landmark locations in each state and allow users to access the Registry of National Natural Landmarks on-line
- Produced electronic boundary maps using GIS technology for over 300 landmarks increasing accuracy of National Natural Landmark boundaries and ease of access for partners needing NNL boundary information
- Contracted for evaluations of nine potential National Natural Landmarks

FY 2003 Program Performance *(Based on the FY 2003 President's Budget)*

- Continue work on the boundary adjustments needed to process withdrawals from existing National Natural Landmarks and coordinates their review by the National Park System Advisory Board prior to the Secretary's approval
- Complete and distribute a revised program National Natural Landmark handbook, which will increase the program's effectiveness and opportunities for partnering
- Finalize boundary revisions for 85 landmarks affected by owner withdrawals
- Recommend at least five potential National Natural Landmarks for designation

FY 2004 Budget Request: National Natural Landmarks

Request Component	Amount
FY 2003 Budget Estimate	993
Programmatic Changes	
• Information Technology Reduction	-1
TOTAL, Program Changes¹	-1
Uncontrollable changes	+7
FY 2004 Budget Request	999
Net change	+6

¹Justification for program changes can be found at the end of this activity's presentation.

Activity: Natural Programs
Program Component: Hydropower Recreation Assistance

FY 2004 Base Program Overview

Hydropower Recreation Assistance presents numerous opportunities for river conservation and enhancement of water-based recreation that are fully compatible with continuing and future operations of hydropower facilities. Hydropower utilities are required to consult with the National Park Service under the Federal Power Act, as amended. The NPS makes recommendations and is often involved in collaborative settlement negotiations with hydropower companies and local recreational interests. Many utility companies have found Park Service assistance valuable in reaching agreements to improve recreational access to rivers and protect recreational experiences for all users. The NPS facilitates negotiations, makes recommendations, designs whitewater boating studies, and works with power companies and user groups to lessen conflicts among industry, boaters, and anglers.



The NPS is working towards re-licensing Big Creek in California (NPS Photo)

Attention is being given to historical and archeological issues associated with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licensing consultations. Staff provide technical assistance to help implement recreational provisions of settlement agreements for hydropower licenses and are beginning to explore opportunities to expedite the hydro licensing process by working with Rivers & Trails staff to develop community partnerships that will develop goals and plans in advance of the licensing process.

Full implementation of recreation-related mitigation efforts may take place several years after National Park Service involvement. GPRA performance measures within this component are designed to examine local results following settlement signing and/or the issuing of a new hydropower operation license. This program has achieved the protection of hundreds of miles of river corridors and trails, and thousands of acres of open space. Park Service staff are now actively working on hydropower licensing from offices in Alaska, California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Utah, Tennessee, Washington, and Wisconsin, with a coordinator in Washington, D.C.

Workload and performance tables are found after the justification of program changes at the end of this activity.

① Hydropower Recreation Assistance online: <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/hydro/index.html>

FY 2002 Program Performance Accomplishments

- Provided assistance on 100 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) hydropower licensing proceedings in 28 states
- Assisted 24 park units on FERC hydropower licensing issues
- Participated in signing major hydropower licensing settlement agreements resulting in continuing generation of hydropower and recreational and conservation enhancements for the following projects: Ansonia/Abenaki, ME; C&O Canal, MD/WV; Hoosic, NY; Bear River, ID; and Red Cedar River, WI
- Sponsored training on FERC hydropower licensing and instream flows for recreation for 15 staff

FY 2003 Program Performance *(Based on the FY 2003 President's Budget)*

- Provide assistance on 82 FERC hydropower licensing proceedings in 27 states
- Assist 19 park units on FERC hydropower licensing issues
- Complete hydropower licensing settlement agreements for the following FERC hydropower projects: Smelt Hill, ME; Big Fork, MT; American Fork, UT; and Penobscot River, ME

FY 2004 Budget Request: Hydropower Recreation Assistance

Request Component	Amount
FY 2003 Budget Estimate	808
Programmatic Changes	
• Information Technology Reduction	-1
TOTAL, Program Changes¹	-1
Uncontrollable changes	+5
FY 2004 Budget Request	812
Net change	+4

¹Justification for program changes can be found at the end of this activity's presentation.

Justification of FY 2004 Budget Request for Natural Programs

Request Component	Amount
FY 2003 Budget Estimate	10,948
Programmatic Changes	
• Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance	+1,500
• Information Technology Reduction	-14
TOTAL, Program Changes	+1,486
Uncontrollable changes	+77
FY 2004 Budget Request	12,511
Net change	+1,563

Rivers, Trails and Conservation and Assistance. +\$1.500 million

The NPS is requesting an increase of \$1.500 million to provide additional technical assistance for river and trail conservation. The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program (RTCA) provides technical assistance and organizational support for locally led conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives. The program shares NPS expertise in planning for trail systems, river conservation, rails-to-trails conver



RTCA: Making a trail come alive with community involvement.

sions, and site restoration. The program capacity is outpaced by the demand for these services. Additional funding would be used to provide technical assistance to new projects currently turned away; less than half of project applicants can be served at the program's current capacity.

This increase would allow the Service to:

- Provide a proven community resource that helps State and local governments plan for more "walkable" communities that foster healthier, more active lifestyles.
- Satisfy 60 new projects requested annually, thereby allowing RTCA to establish a significant presence in at least three new areas that remain under-served by the program.
- Provide NPS staff to help communities find appropriate strategies for preserving their sense of place by creating trails and parks and protecting historic landscapes, rivers, and watersheds.
- Employ cost-effective cooperative agreements to achieve Service goals, and create linkages between local projects and existing Federal programs and funding sources to maximize their effectiveness.

Funds support technical assistance only; projects are implemented using local, State, and private funds, with the value of NPS staff assistance typically being leveraged many times over.

Information Technology Reduction. –\$0.014 million

The Department of the Interior is undertaking significant technology reforms to improve the management of IT investments and to realize short- and long-term efficiencies and savings. The reforms include consolidated purchases of hardware and software; consolidation of support functions including help desks, email support and web services; and coordination of training. The Natural Programs activity includes a reduction of \$0.014 million to reflect the effect of these management reforms.

Workload Tables: Natural Programs

Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program Workload Factors

Performance measures	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Estimate	FY 2004 Estimate
Trails: Miles protected*	1,289	1,000	500
Rivers: Miles protected*	878	685	685
Open space: Acres protected*	19,257	20,000	20,000
Customer satisfaction: Percent of communities served that were satisfied with assistance	92.6%	**	94.8%

* Miles and acres protected are counted five years after a technical assistance project is completed, because local initiatives to protect the resources or construct the trails generally take at least five years to complete.

** Customer surveys are conducted every two years